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MW 775 830 Christian Witness and Other Faiths

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Muck, Terry C., "MW 775 830 Christian Witness and Other Faiths" (2003). *Syllabi*. Book 1839.
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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Fall 2003

MW775 (830) Christian Witness and Other Faiths
 Tuesday, Thursday 2:30 – 3:45
Meeting Room: SH408
Instructor: Terry C. Muck
Phone: 858-2145 **E-Mail:** terry_muck@asburyseminary.edu
Office: Wednesday, 2:00 – 4:30

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: In a world becoming more and more religiously plural, all Christians are faced with the challenge of identifying and articulating an appropriate theological/missiological response to those of other religious traditions. This course looks at key issues in the encounter between Christianity and other religions and raises the questions students need to answer in developing a theological/missiological approach to religious pluralism. Students write a concluding paper outlining their approach to an aspect of pluralism.

II. READINGS

Richard Plantinga, ed. Christianity and Plurality: Classic and Contemporary Readings.
Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
379 pages. ISBN: 0-631-20915-8 (paperback)
Wesley Pluralism Packet
David Bosch. A Spirituality of the Road.
Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2000 (1979).
92 pages. ISBN: 1-57910-795-8 (paperback)
Paul Hiebert. Missiological Implications of Epistemological Shifts.
Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, International, 1999.
135 pages. ISBN: 1-56338-259-8 (paperback)

III. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class attendance and participation in discussion of assigned texts.
2. Write a response paper on each of the assigned readings. Form provided.
Due at class discussion of text.
3. Two examinations.
4. Develop bibliography on Christian approaches to a major religious tradition. Choose from: Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religions, Judaism, Islam, Indigenous religions, New religious movements. Due November 1.
5. Paper on your biblical/theological approach to people of other religions.
Twenty type-written pages (double spaced).
Due: October 23, 2003

IV. SCHEDULE

Sept. 2, 4 - The Challenge of Religious Pluralism

Sept. 9, 11 - Context - Read Plantinga, Parts I, II, III, pp. 1-126

Sept. 16, 18 - Text - Read Plantinga, Part IV, pp. 127-166

Sept. 23, 25 - Theology - Read Wesley Pluralism reading packet

Sept. 30, Oct. 2 - John Wesley and Pluralism.

Oct. 7, 9 - Practices I

Oct. 14, 16 - Practices II - Read Bosch, pp. 1-92

Oct. 21, 23 - Practices III - Approach paper due on October 23

Oct. 28, 30 - Practices IV - Examination on October 30

Nov. 4, 6 - Hermeneutics I - Read Hiebert, pp. 1-135

Nov. 11, 13 - Hermeneutics II - Read Plantinga, Part V, pp. 167-370

Nov. 18 - Hermeneutics III

Nov. 20, 25, 27 - NO CLASS

Dec. 2, 4 - How to approach people of other religions
Final Examination on December 4

Wesley Pluralism Packet

LETTERS

“Letter to John Burton” October 10, 1735

SERMONS

Sermon 61: “The Mystery of Iniquity” (2 Thessalonians 2:7) March 7, 1783

Sermon 63: “The General Spread of the Gospel” (Isaiah 11:9) April 22, 1783

Sermon 69-70: “The Imperfections of Human Knowledge: The Case of Reason Impartially Considered” (1 Corinthians 13:9) March 5, 1784; (1 Corinthians 14:20) July 6, 1781

Sermon 91: “On Charity” (1 Corinthians 13:1-3) October 15, 1784

Sermon 106: “On Faith” (Hebrews 11:6) April 9, 1788

Sermon 119: “Walking by Sight and Walking by Faith” (2 Corinthians 5:7) December 30, 1788

Sermon 122: “Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity” (Jeremiah 8:22) July 2, 1789

Sermon 130: “On Living Without God” (Ephesians 2:12) July 6, 1790

COMMENTARY

Randy Maddox, “Wesley and the Question of Truth or Salvation through Other Religions,”
Wesleyan Theological Journal 27 (Spring-Fall 1992): 7-29.

John Sanders, No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1992), 249-251.

S. Mark Heim, ed. Grounds for Understanding: Ecumenical Resources for Responses to Religious Pluralism (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998), 93-106.

Jerry Walls, The Problem of Pluralism: Recovering United Methodist Identity (Wilmore, Kentucky: Good News, 1986), chapter 3.

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Christian Witness and Other Faiths
Reading Interaction Form

Fall 2003

Name_____Date_____

Chapter/Article/Page #s_____

Evaluation: 1 (low) to 10 (high)_____

Summary/Key Idea:

What new insights have you gained from reading this material?

What are the missiological applications of these insights?

What are some issues, concerns, etc., that have been raised that you would like to discuss in our class?